

March 14, 2022

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, Senator Kissel, Representative Fishbein, distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary. My name is Robert Dakers and I am writing as a member as the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) Team at First Church of Christ, Congregational in Glastonbury.

I am writing **IN STONG SUPPORT** of:

- [S.B. No. 387](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.
- [S.B. No. 392](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

I am writing **IN STRONG OPPOSITION** to the following bills:

- [S.B. No. 365](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS
- S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.
- [H.B. No. 5418](#) AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE

Our state saw a tremendous drop in car thefts over the past three decades, dropping from over 26,000 in 1991 to just under 6,000 in 2019. We then saw a rise to over 8,400 in 2020. My town of Glastonbury saw a rise to 76 motor vehicle thefts in 2020, but saw them drop to 36 in 2021.

Some are seeking use the 2020 spike in auto thefts as a reason to rollback elements of the criminal and juvenile justice reforms that we have achieved together as a state. Meanwhile, however, CCSU researchers have not found a correlation between auto thefts and these reforms. They point instead to a correlation with the pandemic, with its related youth mental health crisis and many destructive impacts on our lives. Are laws such as those I am opposing, which would increase incarceration for young people experiencing these and other traumas, the way to go? We can and must do better than this.

We all also know that fears raised about crime have resulted in laws, often enacted as backlash to social justice progress, that have fallen unjustly and most devastatingly upon Black and Brown lives. This realization should never be lost upon us as we consider these matters.

Thank you for your consideration of my views in this regard.